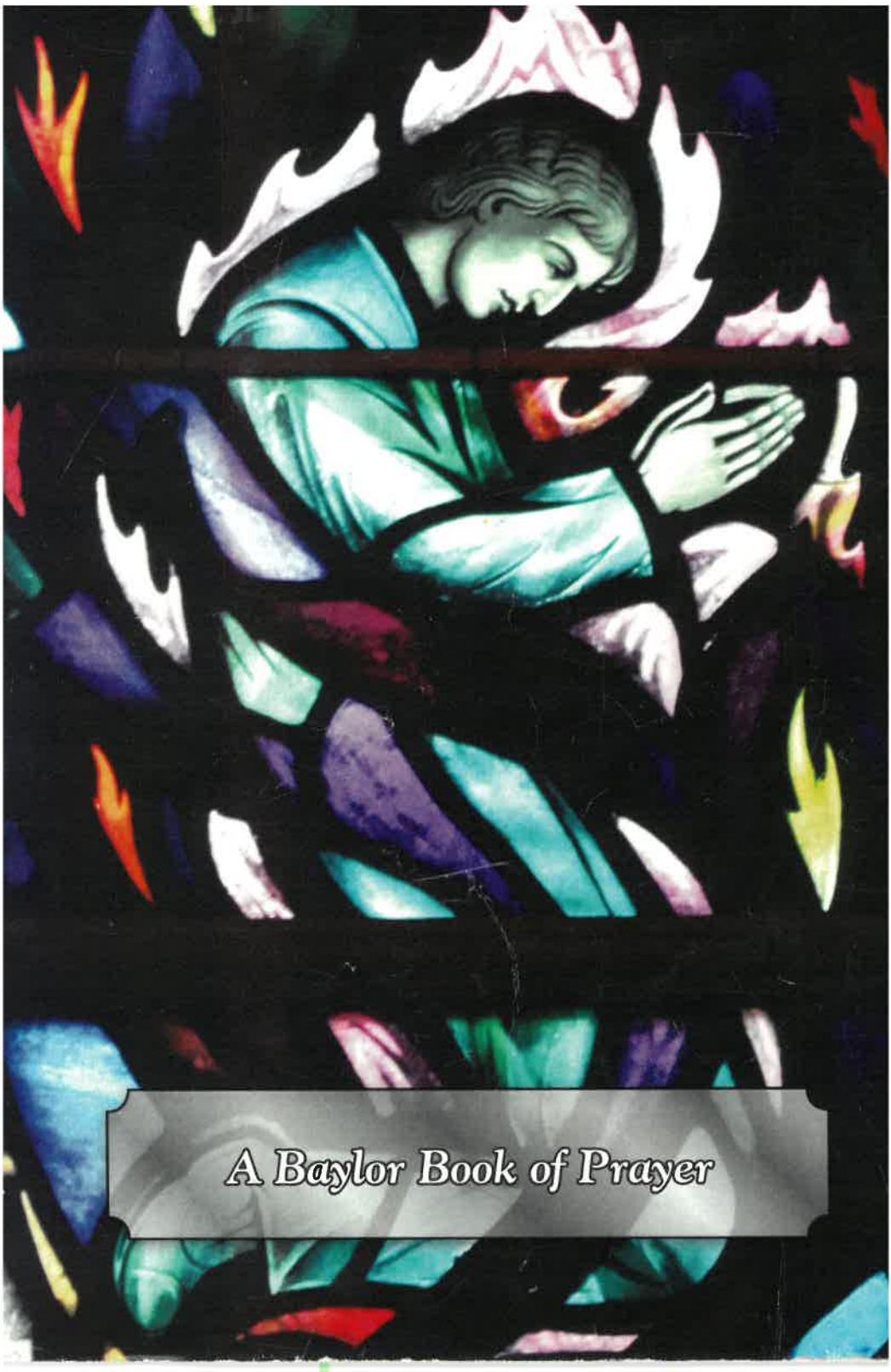
A Baylor Book of Prayer

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BAYLOR
UNIVERSITY

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Let Us Pray

We pray and pray together because God is calling us always into a deeper encounter with the truth and depth of God's being. Prayer is always first a way of being with God. Joan Chittiser writes,

> *The function of prayer is not to establish a routine; it is to establish a relationship with the God who is in relationship with us always. The function of times of prayer, then, is not to have us say prayers; it is to enable our lives to become a prayer outside of prayer, to become "pure of heart," one with God, centered in the truth that is Truth and the power that is Power and the love that is Love.*

As we truly pray, we are truly centered in the reality of God, in the "love that is Love." In a way, that's all that matters, being centered in Love. It's the what, not the how that matters ultimately, right? But what we've learned throughout the ages, through scripture, through the Tradition, through deep inner knowing, is that there is a kind of roadmap to the center. That's why Christians have prayed together and prayed together in certain ways, using certain forms. And these forms have been reverenced and passed on by saints, by those made holy by their life of prayer. They understood the rhythms of prayer and the classic forms of prayer to be important practices, holy motions, spiritual exercise that would enable a life beyond the walls of any chapel to be good and loving and at peace.

Our prayer book is designed to be faithful to the roadmap of the ages regarding prayer, leading us through certain movements. Each section of the book engages us in another important movement of prayer. We begin by gathering, not just a community but ourselves... our scattered selves. Then we move towards gratitude, then to grace. Next we respond to God's call to care about the world and remember others in prayer. We then, confess the mystery of our faith together and conclude our prayers by being empowered with God's blessing. Each form of prayer is an exercise that leads us more deeply into communion with God but also equips us more fully to live in God's kingdom.

Every person, every soul that longs for God, brings something unique to prayer and this is a good thing, which is essential to real communion with God. And truly it is the what, not the how, that matters ultimately. But even as we celebrate what is personal in prayer, we also trust in the wisdom of the larger faith community both past and present. So, from this place of humility before the Tradition and with our most authentic selves, and by God's Spirit... let us pray.

God's People Gathering

Old Testament Acclamations

From Genesis 28:17

Surely God is in this place.

This is none other than the house of God.

From I Samuel 3:9

Speak Lord,

your servants are listening.

From I Chronicles 16:28, 29

Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;

Bring an offering, and come before him;

Worship the Lord in holy array.

From Psalm 19:14

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart,

be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

From Psalm 104:30

When God sends His Spirit… **we are created.**

When God sends His Spirit… **all things are made new.**

From Isaiah 30:15

For God, the Holy One of Israel, has said,

In returning and rest you shall be saved;

in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.

From Isaiah 6:3

Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God Almighty.

The whole earth is filled with his glory.

God is in his holy temple.

Let the whole earth fall silent.

From Isaiah 40:31

But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;

They shall mount up with wings like eagles.

They shall run and not be weary.

They shall walk and not faint.

Words From the Gospels

From Matthew 7:7

Ask… **and it shall be given.**
Seek… **and you shall find.**
Knock… **and the door will be opened.**

From Matthew 26:41

Jesus said, "Keep watch with me…
The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.

From Matthew 11:28

Jesus said, "Come unto me all you who are weary and heavy laden,
and I will give you rest."

From Matthew 6:26

Jesus said, "Look at the birds of the air, they do not sow or reap
or store away in barns, and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them.
Are you not much more valuable than they?"

From Matthew 6:27

Jesus said, "Can any one of you by worrying
add a single day to your life?"

From Matthew 18:20

Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered in my name,
there I am among them."

From Mark 4:39-40

Jesus said, "Peace, be still…
Where is your faith?"

From Mark 6:31

Jesus said, "Come away with me to a quiet place
and rest for a while."

From John 12:32

Jesus said, "If I be lifted up…
I will draw all unto me."

Invitations from the Epistles and Revelation

From Romans 1:7

To all who are loved by God and called to be his holy people:
grace and peace to you from God and Father
and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

From Philippians 4:6-7

In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving
make your requests known to God.
And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,
will guard your heart in Christ Jesus.

From Colossians 4:2-3

Devote yourselves to prayer, be watchful, be thankful.
And pray that God may open a door
that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ.

From James 4:8,10

Draw near to God,
and God will draw near to you.
Humble yourselves before God.
And you will be exalted.

From Revelation 1:4-6

Grace and peace to you from Him who is, and who was,
and who is to come...
And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness,
the first born from the dead.
To him who loves us and who has freed us...
To him be glory and power forever and ever! Amen.

From Revelation 22:17

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come."
Let everyone who hears say, "Come."
Let everyone who is thirsty come.
Let anyone who wishes take the water of life.

Wisdom from the Tradition

Balai (5th century Syrian poet and bishop)

He dwells tenderly in our midst.
He draws us to him in the bonds of love.
He stays with us and calls us to take the path to heaven to dwell with him.

Augustine

Hasten to the springs, draw from the wells.
In God is the wellspring of life,
A spring that can never fail.
In his light is found a light that nothing can darken.
Desire that light which your eyes know not!
Your inward eye is preparing to see the light.
Your inward thirst burns to be quenched at the spring.

Ambrose

O God, teach me to seek You, and reveal Yourself to me when I seek You,
For I cannot seek You unless You first teach me,
Nor find You unless You first reveal Yourself to me.
Let me seek You in longing, and long for You in seeking.
Let me find You in love, and love You in finding.

Teilhard de Chardin

To adore... That means to lose oneself in the unfathomable, to plunge into the inexhaustible, to find peace in the incorruptible, to be absorbed in defined immensity, to offer oneself to the fire and the transparency, and to give of one's deepest to that whose depth has no end.

Thomas Kelly

Deep within us all there is an amazing inner sanctuary of the soul,
a holy place, a Divine Center, a speaking Voice, to which we may continuously return.

John Bunyan

In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart.

Howard Thurman

Bring in your scattered parts, be present at all levels of your consciousness.
This is the time of togetherness.
Only the one who has come to a point of the holy focus,
may be blessed with the vision of God.

Henry Alline

Awake, my soul!
Awake, gaze on, fall in love with,
and forever adore God.

Thomas Merton

This act of total surrender is not merely a fantastic intellectual and mystical gamble; it is something much more serious. It is an act of love for this unseen person, who, in the very gift of love by which we surrender ourselves to this reality also makes his presence known to us.

Hugh Prather

The truth is true. That is the eternal welcome that awaits us now. Nothing can change our home. Its brilliance is not diminished by our half-hearted efforts. Forget your mistakes and begin again.

Olivier Clement

The ocean of the divine essence springs from the fathomless depths of a Person, the Father. Yet through Christ we can, in the Holy Sprit, call him Abba, the word of trust and tenderness...

Ted Loder

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given.
I would be silent now, Lord, and expectant... that I may receive the gift I need, so I may become the gifts others need.

Wendell Berry

O God... may I come into the presence of still water
and feel above me the day-blind stars waiting with their light.
For a time may I rest in the grace of your world,
and be free. (adapted)

Words and Prayers of Invocation

Traditional Invitation

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Litany of Declaration

We're thirsty… **for living water.**

We're hungry… **for the bread of life.**

We're searching… **for truth that sets us free.**

We're listening… **for words that lead to life.**

We're longing… **for peace that is beyond our understanding.**

Open Unto Me

Open unto me – **light for my darkness.**

Open unto me – **courage for my fear.**

Open unto me – **hope for my despair.**

Open unto me – **peace for my turmoil.**

Open unto me – **joy for my sorrow.**

Open unto me – **strength for my weakness.**

Open unto me – **wisdom for my confusion.**

Open unto me – **forgiveness for my sin.**

Open unto me – **tenderness for my toughness.**

Open unto me – **love for my hate.**

Open unto me – **your Self for my self.**

Lord, Lord – **Open unto me.**

- Howard Thurman

Trinitarian Acclamation

Glory be to God, **whom we know as Father…**

And to the Son, **Jesus Christ, our Savior…**

And to the Holy Spirit, **the Living Presence…**

Who is with us, even now. **Glory be to God.**

Samuel's Litany

As we turn aside from all else… **speak Lord, your servants are listening.**
As we declare our praise… **speak Lord, your servants are listening.**
As we acknowledge our need… **speak Lord, your servants are listening.**
As we remember the world's need… **speak Lord, your servants are listening.**
As we express our faith… **speak Lord, your servants are listening.**
As we depart in peace... **speak Lord, your servants are listening.**

Admonition to Presence

God is here within and among us... **and we lift up our hearts.**
Now, in this moment… **may we be present only to God.**
May we turn away from all else… **and look only to God.**
May we lose ourselves in God's greatness… **and in God's healing care.**
May our souls be touched… **as we listen for God's Truth.**
May our sins be remembered… and **remembered no more.**
May our spirits be renewed… **that we might go forth in power.**

Unison Invocation

Holy God, speak to us,
That we might hear the good news,
And trust our lives into your hands and keeping.
May we be present now, even as you are present to us.
Eternal Friend, this is our prayer. Amen.

Responsive Affirmation

The Lord is here. God, the Creator above us,
The Redeemer among us,
The Sustainer within us... is here.
In the faces of our friends,
In the songs and in the stillness,
In prayers of praise and confessions of faith,
In all that we do and all that we are,
The Lord is here.

Songs for Gathering

As the Deer

As the deer panteth for the water, so my soul longeth after Thee.
You alone are my heart's desire and I long to worship Thee.
You alone are my strength, my shield; to you alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart's desire and I long to worship Thee.

Come Thou Fount

Come, Thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise His name – I'm fixed upon it – name of God's redeeming love.

I Love You, Lord

I love You, Lord, and I lift my voice
to worship You, O my soul, rejoice!
Take joy, my King, in what You hear,
may it be a sweet, sweet sound in Your ear.

Pass Me Not

Pass me not, O gentle Savior, hear my humble cry,
While on others Thou art calling, do not pass me by.
Savior, savior, hear my humble cry.
While on others Thou art calling,
Do not pass me by.

Come by Here, Lord

Come by here, Lord, come by here.
Come by here, Lord, come by here.
Come by here, Lord, come by here.
O Lord, come by here.
(Someone's cryin', Lord, ... prayin')

O Come, Let Us Adore Him

O come, let us adore Him.
O come, let us adore Him.
O come, let us adore Him.
Christ, the Lord.

Stay with Me, by Taizé

Stay with me, remain here with me,
watch and pray, watch and pray.

Come and Pray in Us, by Taizé

Come and pray in us, Holy Spirit, come and pray in us,
Come and visit us, Holy Spirit, Spirit, come, Spirit come.

The Shema

Shema Israel
Adonai Elohaynu, Adonai Echod
Hear, O Hear, the Lord our God,
The Lord is one.

God, We are Here

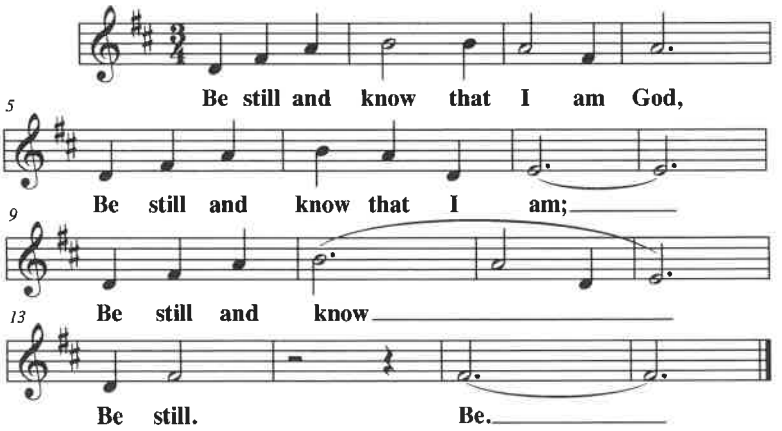
God, here we are, Your people wait,
Show us your hope, show us your ways.
We long for you to heal our land,
Jesus, hold us in the palm of you hand.

Unite My Heart

Unite my heart, O God
that I may see,
that I may know,
that I may be;
Unite my heart, O God.

Be Still And Know

Words: from Ps. 46:10 Music: Kurt Kaiser



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Draw Me

Words: Burt Burleson — Music: Kurt Kaiser

Source of all be - ing, draw me, draw me,
Light of all souls flood me, flood me; Mind of al truths
wak-en me, Heart of all hearts, hold me, hold me.

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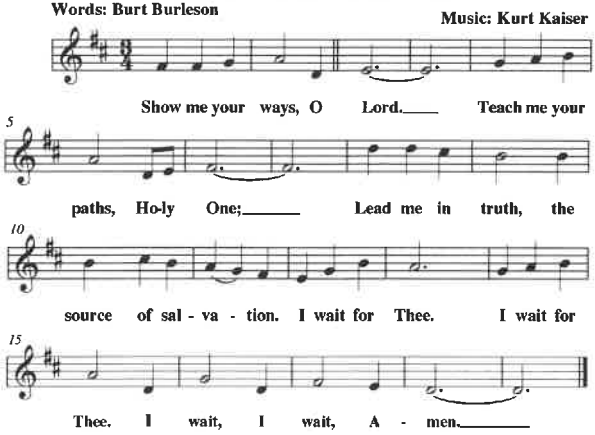
Show Me Your Ways

Words: Burt Burleson — Music: Kurt Kaiser


Show me your ways, O Lord. Teach me your
paths, Ho-ly One; Lead me in truth, the
source of sal - va - tion. I wait for Thee. I wait for
Thee. I wait, I wait, A - men.

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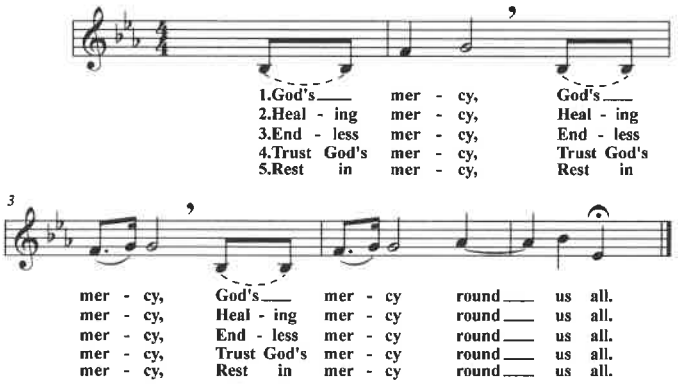
Mercy Round Us All

Text and Music: Burt Burleson


1.God's mer - cy, God's
2.Heal - ing mer - cy, Heal - ing
3.End - less mer - cy, End - less
4.Trust God's mer - cy, Trust God's
5.Rest in mer - cy, Rest in
mer - cy, God's mer - cy round us all.
mer - cy, Heal - ing mer - cy round us all.
mer - cy, End - less mer - cy round us all.
mer - cy, Trust God's mer - cy round us all.
mer - cy, Rest in mer - cy round us all.

Other Scriptures for the Time of Gathering

Psalm 25; Psalm 27; Psalm 42; Psalm 63; Psalm 71; Psalm 100; Psalm 116; Psalm 139; Psalm 143; Isaiah 43: 28-31; John 4: 21-24; I Corinthians 1: 1-9; I Corinthians 4: 5; Ephesians 1: 1-10; Colossians 1: 1-6; I John 1: 1-4

Hymns for the Time of Gathering

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing; Come, We That Love the Lord; Seek Ye First; O, Worship the King; Come, Christians, Join to Sing; Alleluia (Gaither); O Come, All Ye Faithful; *Come, Thou, Almighty King; Father, I Adore You; Love Divine, All Love's Excelling; Spirit of the Living God; Here I Am to Worship*

Thanksgiving and Adoration

Psalm 95

O come, let us sing to the LORD;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!
For the LORD is a great God,
and a great King above all gods.
In his hand are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains are his also.
The sea is his, for he made it, and the dry land,
which his hands have formed.
O come, let us worship and bow down,
let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!

Psalm 96: 1-13

Sing to the Lord a new song; **sing to the Lord all the earth.**
Sing to the Lord, praise his name; **proclaim his salvation day after day.**
Declare his glory among the nations; **his deeds among the people.**
Great is the Lord and worthy of praise; **the Lord made the heavens.**
Let the heavens rejoice; **let the earth be glad.**
Let the sea resound, **and all that is in it.**
Let the fields be jubilant, **and everything in them.**
Then the trees will sing for joy; **They will sing before the Lord.**
Ascribe to the Lord glory. **Worship the Lord in splendor.**

Psalm 97

O sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things.
His right hand and his holy arm have gotten him victory.
The LORD has made known his victory;
he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.
He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.
Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises.

Psalm 98

O sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things.
His right hand and his holy arm have gotten him victory.
The LORD has made known his victory;
he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations.
He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.
Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises.
Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,
with the lyre and the sound of melody.
With trumpets and the sound of the horn
make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD.
Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
the world and those who live in it.
Let the floods clap their hands;
let the hills sing together for joy at the presence of the LORD.

Psalm 100

Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth. Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing. Know that the LORD Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter His gates with thanksgiving, And His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him; bless His name. For the LORD is good; His loving kindness is everlasting, And His faithfulness is to all generations.

Psalm 103

Praise the Lord, O my soul... **all my inmost being, praise his holy name.**
Praise the Lord, O my soul... **and forget not all his benefits;**
Who forgives all your sins... **and heals all your diseases,**
Who redeems your life from the pit... **and crowns you with kindness.**
Who satisfies you with good things... **so that you are renewed.**
The Lord works righteousness... **and justice for the oppressed.**
The Lord is gracious... **slow to anger and abounding in love.**
He does not treat us as our sins deserve... **or repay our iniquities.**
As high as the heavens are above us... **so great is his love for us.**
As far as the east is from the west... **he has removed our sins from us.**
As a father has compassion on his children... **God has compassion on us.**
Praise the Lord... **you servants who do his will.**
Praise the Lord... **everywhere in his dominion.**
Praise the Lord... **O my soul.**

Psalm 104

How many are your works, O Lord. The clouds are your chariot and the winds, your messenger. You gave the world a firm foundation, and made the springs flow. You give water to every living thing, the wild donkeys, the little birds, and the trees. You made the moon and the sun. You made the sea, great and wide, where the ships go back and forth, and the sea creatures play. You take care of everything. When you send your Spirit things are created. When you send your Spirit, everything is made new. How many are your works, O Lord.

Psalm 118

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; **his love endures forever.**
Let God's people say: **"His love endures forever."**
Let those who reverence God say: **"His love endures forever."**
When hard pressed, I cried to the Lord; **he brought me into a spacious place.**
The Lord is my strength and my defense; **he has become my salvation.**
I will not die but live, **and will proclaim what the Lord has done.**
The stone the builders rejected **has become the cornerstone;**
The Lord has done this, **and it is marvelous in our eyes.**
The Lord has done it this very day; **let us rejoice today and be glad.**
You are my God, and I will praise you; **you are my God, and I will exalt you.**
Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; **his love endures forever.**

Psalm 150

Praise the Lord.
Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty heavens.
Praise him for his acts of power;
praise him for his surpassing greatness.
Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,
praise him with the harp and lyre,
praise him with tambourine and dancing;
praise him with the strings and flute,
praise him with the clash of cymbals,
praise him with resounding cymbals.
Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord.

Words of Praise from the Tradition

Great Vespers of Pentecost

Come, ye people,
let us adore God in three persons:
The Son in the Father, with the Holy Spirit.
For the Father from everlasting begets the Word,
who shares his kingdom and his eternity,
and the Holy Spirit is the Father,
glorified with the Son,
a single power,
a single essence,
a single godhead.
This is who we adore, saying...
Glory be to thee, O Holy Trinity!

Theophilus of Antioch

The form of God is ineffable and indescribable, and cannot be seen with the eyes of flesh. He is in glory uncontainable, in greatness incomprehensible, in loftiness inconceivable, in strength incomparable, in wisdom inaccessible, in love inimitable, in beneficence inexpressible. Just as the soul in man is not seen, since it is invisible to men, but we know of its existence through the movements of the body, so God cannot be seen by human eyes, but he is seen and known through his providence and his works.

St. Ephrem the Syrian

The Great One who became small,
the Wakeful who slept,
the Pure One who was baptized,
the Living One who died.
The King who abased himself to ensure honor for all.
Blessed is your honor!

Mechtild of Magdeburg

O burning mountain, O chosen sun, O perfect moon, O fathomless well.
O unattainable height, O clearness beyond measure, O wisdom without end.
O mercy without limit, O strength beyond resistance, O crown of all majesty.
The humblest you have created sings your praise.

Thomas Merton

The trees indeed love You without knowing You,
Without being aware of Your presence...
The beautiful dark clouds ride slowly across the sky musing on You like children
who do not know what they are dreaming of as they play.
In the midst of them all, I know You and I know of Your Presence.
O kind and terrible love, which You have given
and which could never be in my heart if You did not love me!
I am loved by You, most of all as one who has offended You.
I am seen by You under the sky and my offenses have been forgotten.

Catherine de Hueck Doherty

Daily we enter the Trinity through our journey inward.
There I find the God who dwells in my heart.
Immediately, I open wide my arms to embrace my brother and sister
with this renewed life! I touch God, I touch you,
and I am cruciform as a Christian is meant to be.
I pick you up and bring you with me, not into myself but upwards.
I lift you up to the Trinity.

Barbara Brown Taylor

God is greater than my imagination, wiser than my wisdom, more dazzling than the universe, as present as the air I breathe and utterly beyond my control. That is, in short, what makes me a Christian. As the creature of a God like that, I need a mediator, an advocate, a flesh-and-blood handle on the inscrutable mystery that gives birth to everything that is.

Ted Loder

Eternal One, silence from whom my words come; questioner from whom my questions arise; lover of whom all my loves are hints; disturber in whom alone I find my rest; mystery in whose depths I find healing and myself;
Enfold me now in your presence; restore to me your peace; renew me though your power; and ground me in your grace.

Henri Nouwen

When you pray, you profess that you are not God and that you wouldn't want to be...

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Saint Francis' Prayer of Adoration

You are beauty, the protector, our custodian and defender.
You are strength, refreshment – and you are our hope, faith, and charity.
You are all our sweetness.
You are eternal life, great and wonderful Lord,
Almighty God and merciful Savior.

The General Thanksgiving (The Book of Common Prayer)

Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you for the splendor of the whole creation, for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love. We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving care which surrounds us on every side. We thank you for setting us at tasks which demand our best efforts, and for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us. We thank you also for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you alone. Above all, we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ; for the truth of his Word and the example of his life; for his steadfast obedience, by which he overcame temptation; for his dying, through which he overcame death; and for his rising to life again, in which we are raised to the life of your kingdom. Grant us the gift of your Spirit, that we may know him and make him known; and through him, at all times and in all places, may give thanks to you in all things. Amen.

Traditional Prayer of Thanksgiving

For the power Thou hast given me to lay hold of things unseen:
For the strong sense I have that this is not my home:
For my restless heart which nothing finite can satisfy:
I give Thee thanks, O God.
For the invasion of my soul by Thy Holy Spirit:
For all human love and goodness that speak to me of Thee:
for the fullness of Thy glory outpoured in Jesus Christ:
I give Thee thanks, O God.

Responsive Prayer of Praise

We praise you, our God,
For your love revealed to us in Jesus Christ
and brought near to us by your Holy Spirit.

We praise you, our God,
For bringing your people from bondage into freedom
and making of them one body in Christ.
We praise you, our God,
For calling us to this place of prayer.
Make our worship worthy of your love toward us.
Amen.

Litany of Thanksgiving

Lift up your hearts… **we lift them up to the Lord.**
For the goodness of this day and this hour… **we thank the Lord.**
For the Spirit within us and among us… **we thank the Lord.**
For the gift of grace and the message of salvation… **we thank the Lord.**
For the Church, past and present… **we thank the Lord.**
For the love made real through those around us… **we thank the Lord.**
Lift up your hearts… *(silent prayers of gratitude)*
For all these gifts, now and always… **we thank the Lord.**

Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving

Praise be to you, Lord God of all creation…
For the gift of this day…
For the joy of this hour…
For the Church that surrounds us now.
Receive our gratitude as we count our many blessings.
We thank you…
For beauty and every expression of it in our world;
For grace and every healing moment we've known;
For love and all who have made it real.
Grant that in our time of prayer we might see and remember all that is in our keeping. Grant that we might love all that is in our keeping. Amen.

Unison Prayer and Doxology

Praise be to you, Lord God of all creation.
For the gift of this day…
For the joy of this hour…
For the Spirit that is present now…
We lift our hearts in praise.
Receive our gratitude as we count our many blessings.
(singing)
Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise Him all creatures, here below.
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host.
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Songs of Thanksgiving and Adoration

The Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise Him all creatures, here below.
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host.
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Bless the Lord, by Taizé

Bless the Lord, my soul
and bless God's holy name.
Bless the Lord, my soul,
who leads me into life.

We Adore You, Lord Jesus Christ, by Taizé

We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ.

In the Lord I'll be Ever Thankful, by Taizé

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful, in the Lord I will rejoice.
Look to God, do not be afraid.
Lift up your voices the Lord is near.
Lift up your voices the Lord is near.

Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart

Give thanks with a grateful heart
Give thanks to the Holy One
Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ, His Son *(repeat)*

And now let the weak say, "I am strong"
Let the poor say, "I am rich"
Because of what the Lord has done for us. *(repeat)*
Give thanks.

Father, I Adore You

Father, I adore You, lay my life before You; how I love You.
Jesus, I adore You, lay my life before You; how I love You.
Spirit, I adore You, lay my life before You; how I love You.

Shout to the Lord

My Jesus, My Savior,
Lord, there is none like You;
All of my days I want to praise
The wonders of Your mighty love.

My comfort, my shelter,
Tower of refuge and strength;
Let every breath, all that I am
Never cease to worship You.

Shout to the Lord, all the earth, let us sing.
Power and majesty, praise to the King;
Mountains bow down and the seas will roar
At the sound of Your name.
I sing for joy at the work of Your hands,
Forever I'll love You, forever I'll stand,
Nothing compares to the promise I have in You.

Glorify Thy Name

Father, (Jesus, Spirit) we love You We worship and adore You
Glorify Thy Name in all the earth.
Glorify Thy Name. Glorify Thy Name.
Glorify Thy Name in all the earth.

His Name is Wonderful

His name is Wonderful, His name is Wonderful,
His name is Wonderful, Jesus, my Lord;
He is the mighty King, Master of everything,
His name is Wonderful, Jesus, my Lord.
He's the great Shepherd, the Rock al all ages, Almighty God is He;
Bow down before Him, love and adore Him,
His name is Wonderful, Jesus, my Lord.

Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father
and to the Son
and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning,
is now and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen, amen.

Other Scriptures for the Time of Thanksgiving and Adoration

I Chronicles 16; I Chronicles 29: 10-13; Psalm 8; Psalm 33; Psalm 67; Psalm 113; Psalm 118; Psalm 138; Psalm 149; Ephesians 3: 20;

Hymns for the Time of Thanksgiving and Adoration

All Creatures of Our God and King; All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name; Come, Thou Almighty King; Fairest Lord Jesus; Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee; Now Thank We All Our God; Praise the Lord, Ye Heavens Adore Him; Praise to the Lord, the Almighty; Rejoice, the Lord is King; When Morning Guilds the Skies; For the Beauty of the Earth; We Praise Thee, O God;

Confession and Assurance

Prayers of Confession

UNISON CONFESSION

Holy and infinite God, we confess our need for you. We have sinned and need your forgiveness. We are lost and need your guidance. We are broken and need your healing touch. Hear our prayers, O Lord. *(silent confession)*

TRADTIONAL UNISON CONFESSION

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. AMEN.

LITANY OF CONFESSION

Lord, we have taken our blessings for granted... **forgive us our sin.**
We have mistaken the finite for the Infinite... **forgive us our sin.**
We have settled for something less than whole... **forgive us our sin.**
We have celebrated what is less than beautiful... **forgive us our sin.**
We have lived in ways less than loving... **forgive us our sin.**
Forgive us, Lord, for we have sinned... *(silent confession)*

TRADITIONAL CONFESSION AND THE JESUS PRAYER

Gracious God, we acknowledge our need of you today.
Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy.
We have not loved you with all our heart, mind, and strength.
Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy.
We have not loved our neighbors as we love ourselves.
Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy.
We have not done those things which we ought to have done.
Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy.
And we have done those things which we ought not to have done.
Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy.
We have spoken in haste, in anger, in condemnation, in judgment.
Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy.
We have harbored unhealthy thoughts and passions and worries.
Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy.
Gracious, God, we acknowledge our sin... our need of you.
Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy.
We receive now your great mercy and rest in your eternal love.
Amen.

Scriptures of Assurance

Psalm 34: 18, 22

God is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit. Those who take refuge in God will not know condemnation.

Psalm 3: 8-12

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.
He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever;
He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay
us according to our iniquities.
For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his love for those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Isaiah 43: 25

I, even I, am the one who blots out your transgressions...
and remembers your sins no more.

Lamentations 3: 22-23

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail.
They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Romans 5:1; 8:1

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...
There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Litany of Gospel Readings

Lord, if you are willing, **make me clean.** *(Matthew 8:2b)*
I believe, **help me in my unbelief.** *(Mark 9:24)*
Jesus, Son of David, **have pity on me.** *(Mark 10:47)*
Father, **I have sinned against heaven and against you.** *(Luke 15:18b)*
Father, **everything is possible for you.** *(Mark 14:36)*
Good teacher, **what must I do to inherit eternal life?** *(Luke 18:18)*
Take heart, **your sins are forgiven.** *(Matthew 9:2b)*
Take heart, **your faith has healed you.** *(Mark 5:34)*

Words of Assurance

Litany of Assurance

We trust in God,
Whose mercy knows no end.
We trust in God,
Whose love is healing all brokenness.
We trust in God,
Whose grace is sufficient for every need.

Traditional Pronouncement *(Book of Common Prayer)*

Almighty God have mercy on you,
Forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ,
Strengthen you in all goodness,
And by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.
Amen.

Contemporary Pronouncement

God's mercy never ends;
And I declare to you, in the name of Christ, that your sins are forgiven.
You are God's beloved. You are God's child.
Remember... and walk in God's grace.
Amen.

Pronouncement from Lamentations

God's mercies will never fail us,
They are new each morning.
Great is God's faithfulness.
Amen.

Contemporary Words of Encouragement

God's heart has been made known to us in Christ Jesus
and through that name and in his love,
You are forgiven and you are being made whole.
Thanks be to God,
Amen.

Litany of Trust

We trust again this day in God, who is merciful.
We trust again this day in God, who is holy.
We trust again this day in God, who delivers us.
We trust again this day in God, who keeps us.

Ancient Words of Trust and Surrender

Father, I abandon myself into your hands; do with me what you will. Whatever you may do, I thank you: I am ready for all, I accept all. Let only your will be done in me. I wish no more than this, O Lord. Into your hands I commend my soul; I offer it to you with all the love of my Heart, for I love you Lord, and so need to give myself, to surrender myself into your hands, without reserve and with boundless confidence, for you are my Father.

- Foucauld *(desert father)*

Contemporary Assurance and Admonition

The truth is true.
That is the eternal welcome that awaits us now.
Nothing can change our home.
Its brilliance is not diminished by our half-hearted efforts.
Forget your mistakes and begin again.

- Hugh Prather

Words of Remembrance and Grace

We are children, perhaps, at the very moment when we know that it is as children that God loves us – not because we have deserved his love and not in spite of our undeserving; not because we try and not because we recognize the futility of our trying; but simply because he has chosen to love us. We are children because he is our Father; and all our efforts, fruitful and fruitless, to do good, to speak truth, to understand, are the efforts of children who, for all their "precociousness," are children still in that before we loved him, he loved us, as children through Jesus Christ our Lord.

– Frederick Buechner

Ancient Proclamation

God judges us by our true inner nature,
which is always kept whole in him, safe and sound forever.
And this judgment comes from his rightfulness,
whereas we judge by the outward, changeable nature…
In his judgment I saw him assign no whit of blame to us."

- Julian of Norwich

Ancient Affirmation

When you turn to Him
you become that which He is Himself.

- Gregory of Nyssa

Songs of Confession and Assurance

There is a Place of Quiet Rest

There is a place of quiet rest near to the heart of God,
A place where sin cannot molest, near to the heart of God.
O, Jesus, blessed redeemer, Sent from the heart of God.
Hold us who wait before Thee, Near to the heart of God.

The Jesus Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, son of the Living God,
have mercy, have mercy, upon us.

Lord Have Mercy

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy on me.
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy on me.

Blessed Assurance

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of his Spirit, washed in His blood.
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my savior all the day long.
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my savior all the day long.

Marvelous Grace

Grace, grace, God's grace,
Grace that will pardon and cleanse within.
Grace, grace, God's grace,
Grace that is greater than all our sin.

The Lord is My Light, by Taizé

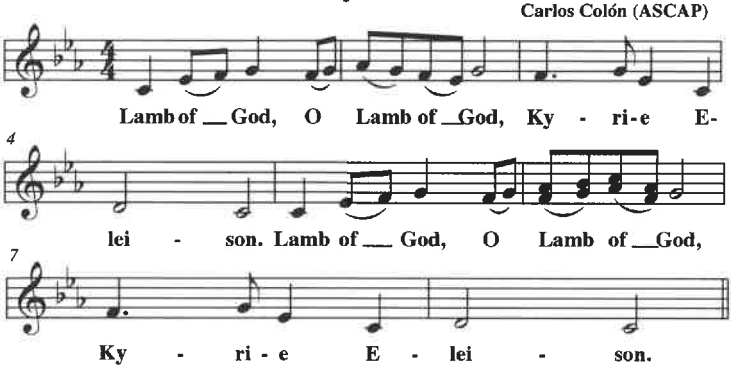
The Lord is my light, my light and salvation, in God I trust, in God I trust.

Come and Fill, by Taizé

Come and fill our hearts with your peace.
You alone, O Lord, are holy.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace.
Alleluia!

Kyrie

Carlos Colón (ASCAP)



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Have Mercy, O God

Psalm 51:1

Music: Carlos Colón (ASCAP)

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O How He Love You and Me

O how he loves you and me, O how he loves you and me;
He gave his life – what more could he give?
O how he loves you, O how he loves me,
O how he loves you and me.

Dear Lord, Forgive

Text: C. Maude Battersby

Music: Carlos Colón and Ryan Richardson

1. If I havewound-ed a - ny soul to - day, If
2. If I have ut - tered i - dle words or vain, If
3. If I have been per-verse, or hard, or cold, If
4. For - give the sins I have con-fessed to thee; For -
I have caused one foot to go as-tray, If I have walked in
I have turned a - side from want or pain, Lest I of - fend some
I have longed for shel - ter in the fold, When thou has giv - en
give the se - cret sins I do not see; O guide me, love me,
my own will - ful way, Dear Lord, for - give!
o - ther through the strain,
me some fort to hold,
and my keep - er be.

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Forgiven

Forgiven, I've been forgiven.
God has looked beyond my sin,
saved me from what I might have been,
gave me a new life within.
I am forgiven by His grace.

Other Scriptures for the Time of Confessing

II Chronicles 7: 14; Psalm 32; Psalm 34; Isaiah 1: 17; Isaiah 43: 11, 25; Joel 2: 12-13; I John 1: 5-7; Romans 12: 1,2; I Timothy 1: 15; Hebrews 4: 14-16

Hymns for the Time of Confessing

Just as I Am; Marvelous Grace; My Faith Looks Up to Thee; Jesus, What a Friend for Sinners; Great is Thy Faithfulness; There Is a Balm in Gilead; Open My Eyes; If My People's Hearts Are Humbled; Breath on Me, Breath of God; Have Thine Own Way Lord; Trust and Obey; I Surrender All; Softly and Tenderly

Petitions and Intercessions

Psalms of Trust, Petition, and Lament

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul:
He leads me in the paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil:
for thou art with me;
Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies;
Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Psalm 25:1-5

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul; in you I trust, O my God.
So let me not be put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.
Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths;
guide me in your truth and teach me,
for you are God my Savior,
and my hope is in you all day long.

Psalm 26:5-8

For God alone, my soul waits in silence,
for my hope is from Him.
He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.
On God rest my deliverance and my honor;
my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.
Trust in Him at all times, O people;
pour out your heart before Him;
God is a refuge for us.

Psalm 27

The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life –
of whom shall I be afraid?
Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear;
Though war break out against me,
even then will I be confident.
One thing I ask of the Lord,
that I may dwell in His house forever.
For in the day of trouble,
He will hide me in the shelter of his tabernacle.
Hear my voice when I call, be merciful and answer me.
Do not hide your face from me, you have been my helper.
Teach me your way, O Lord,
and lead me in a straight path.
Of this I am confident, I will see the goodness of the Lord.
Wait on the Lord, be strong and take heart.
The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear?

Psalm 30

O Lord, my God,
I called to you for help and you healed me.
You brought me up from the grave.
You spared me from going down into the pit.
Sing to the Lord, you saints of his;
praise his holy name,
His anger lasts only a moment,
but his favor lasts a lifetime;
Weeping may remain for a night,
But rejoicing comes in the morning.
To you, O Lord, I called; to the Lord I cried for mercy;
You turned my sobbing into dancing;
You removed my grief and clothed me with joy,
That my heart may sing to you and not be silent.
O Lord, my God, I will give you thanks forever.

Psalm 42

As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God...

Psalm 46

God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear,
though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.
There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.
God is within her; she will not fall.
Nations are in an uproar,
kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice,
the earth melts.
Be still, and know that I am God.

Psalm 80

Hear us, O Shepherd of Israel,
You who lead us like a flock;
You who are Holy and Other;
Light the way before us.
Awaken your might;
Come and save us.
Restore us, O God,
And cause your face to shine upon us.

Psalm 130

Out of the depths I cry to you;
O Lord, hear my voice.
Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy.
If you, O Lord, kept a record of sins, who could stand?
But with you there is forgiveness;
Therefore I am in awe.
I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,
and in his word I put my hope...
Put your hope in the Lord,
for with the Lord is unfailing love
and with him is full redemption.
He himself will redeem you... from all your sins.

Prayers of Petition and Intercession

Traditional Prayer of Intercession

O God, Creator and Preserver of all, we humbly beseech you for all sorts and conditions of people, that you would be pleased to make your ways known to them, and your saving health to all nations. Especially we pray for the universal Church, that it may be so guided and governed by your good Spirit that all who profess and call themselves Christian may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we comment to your caring goodness all who are in any way afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or circumstance (especially _____); that it may please you to comfort and relieve them according to their needs, giving them patience under their sufferings and a way beyond all their afflictions. All this we ask for Jesus Christ's, sake. Amen. *(adapted)*

Intercessions for a College Campus

God of all comfort,

hear our prayers:

For those today whose lives have become too full...

and for those who need places of involvement.

For those who lack discipline to study...

and for those who lack permission to play.

For those whose faith is shaking...

and for those whose faith needs to be shaken.

For those who are sick, who are grieving, who are wounded, who are worried...

and for those who will walk beside them.

For those who need inspiration

and for those who need to be inspiring.

For the health of our community...

and for the wholeness of all your children in it.... *(prayer requests are offered now)*

For all these we pray through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Unison Intercession

Merciful God, source of all life and healing, hear our prayers this day for all who suffer. Use our prayers for all who suffer. (silent or spoken prayers).

Intercessions for Those Beyond our Community

For those who do not have what they need today... **we pray to the Lord.**
(silent prayers)
For those who live in fear today... **we pray to the Lord.**
(silent prayers)
For those who have been forgotten today... **we pray to the Lord.**
(silent prayers)
For those who work for peace and justice today... **we pray to the Lord.**
(silent prayers)
For those who are called to heal today... **we pray to the Lord.**
(silent prayers)
For those burdened to lead today.... **we pray to the Lord.**
(silent prayers)
In the name of the one who loves us all... **we pray to the Lord, amen.**

Silent Prayers of Intercession

Trusting that that God is the God of all.
The Light that enlightens all.
The One in whom we all live and move and have our being,
We pray...
for those who are in need of physical healing and comfort.
for those who struggle emotionally and spiritually.
for those who are sacrificing for the sake of the gospel.
for those who face decisions.
for those who are difficult to love.
for those whom God has laid upon our hearts.
We remember all these into God's care.

Guided Intercessions and the Jesus Prayer

God, we trust in you... And to you we pray together...
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy.
We remember now to you those places and people
far from our influence *(spoken petitions)*. And to you we pray together...
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy.
We remember now to you those with whom we live
and work and study *(spoken petitions)*. And to you we pray together...
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy.
We remember now to you our loved ones *(spoken petitions)*.
And to you we pray together...
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy.
And we remember now to you our own needs *(spoken petitions)*.
And to you we pray together...
Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy.

Songs of Trust and Petition

I Need Thee Every Hour

I need Thee every hour, most gracious Lord;
No tender voice like Thine can peace afford.
I need Thee, O I need Thee; Every hour I need Thee!
O bless me now, my Savior, I come to Thee.

Great is Thy Faithfulness

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions they fail not;
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.
Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided –
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.

Hear Our Prayer, O Lord

Hear our prayer, O Lord.
Hear our prayer, O Lord.
Incline Thine ear to us
and grant us Thy peace.

The Jesus Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, son of the Living God,
have mercy, have mercy, upon us.

All Shall be Well

All shall be well and all shall be well,
and all manner of thing shall be well. (*Julian of Norwich*)

Wait for the Lord, by Taizé

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord, be strong, take heart.

O Lord, Hear My Prayer, by Taizé

O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer, when I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer, come and listen to me.

Jesus Remember Me, by Taizé

Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom.
Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom.

Nothing Can Trouble, by Taizé

Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten. Those who seek God will never go wanting. Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten. God alone fills us.

Within Our Darkest Night, by Taizé

Within our darkest night, you kindle the fire that never dies away, never dies away.

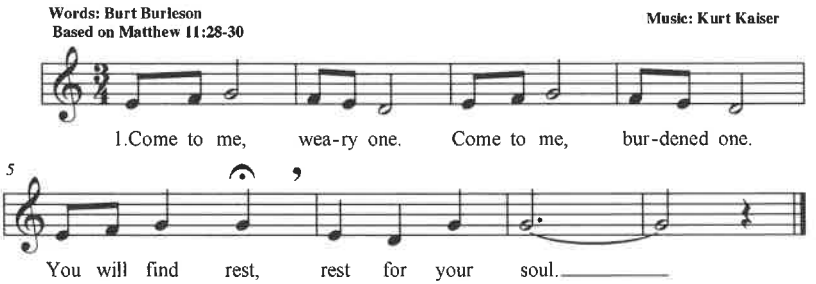
My Soul is at Rest, by Taizé

My soul is at rest in God alone, my salvation comes from God.

Mercy Round Us All

God's... mercy, God's mercy, God's mercy round us all.
(Healing... Endless... Trust God's... Rest in...)

Come to me


Words: Burt Burleson
Based on Matthew 11:28-30
Music: Kurt Kaiser
1.Come to me, wea-ry one. Come to me, bur-dened one.
5
You will find rest, rest for your soul.

2. Take my yoke, weary one.
Take my yoke, burdened one.
You will find rest, rest for your soul.

3. Learn from me, weary one.
Learn from me, burdened one.
You will find rest, rest for your soul.

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Other Scriptures for the Time of Making Petitions and Intercessions

I Kings 19: 4-8; Psalm 90; Ecclesiastes 3: 1-15; Isaiah 40: 1-11; Matthew 8: 23-27; Matthew 9; 18-26; Mark 10: 13-16; Mark 14: 32-34; Luke 4: 38-44; Luke 13: 10-13; John 5: 2-18; John 9: 1-7; Romans 5: 1-11; Romans 8: 26-28; II Corinthians 4: 16-18; Philippians 4: 4, 6-9; I John 4: 16-19; Revelation 21: 1-7

Hymns for the Time of Making Petitions and Intercessions

It is Well with My Soul; Precious Lord, Take My Hand; My Faith Has Found a Resting Place; All the Way My Savior Leads Me; Be Still My Soul; He Leadeth Me; Like a River Glorious; Near to the Heart of God; There is a Balm in Gilead; O Love that Will Not Let Me Go; Give Me Jesus; I Want Jesus to Walk with Me; Jesus! What a Friend for Sinners

Expressing Our Faith

New Testament Expressions of Faith

Matthew 5: 3-10

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.
Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 18: 2-5

Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.
Therefore, whoever takes a humble place – becoming like this child – is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

Mark 2: 22-23

People do not pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins.

Luke 1: 76-79

And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, to give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God, with which the dayspring from on high has visited us; to give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Luke 6: 27-38

Love your enemies,
do good to those who hate you.
Bless those who curse you,
pray for those who mistreat you.
If someone strikes you on one cheek;
turn the other cheek to him.
Do unto others
as you would have them do unto you.
Love your enemies,
do good to them.
You will be children of God,
as you are kind to the ungrateful and the evil.
Do not judge,
and you will not be judged.
Do not condemn,
and you will not be condemned.
Forgive,
and you will be forgiven.
Give,
and it will be given to you.

John 1: 1-4; 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 14; 15-16

If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

John 15: 4-5

Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Acts 1: 8-11

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses…

in Jerusalem,
and in all Judea and Samaria,
and to the ends of the earth."

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.

"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Acts 2: 43-47

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common… Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the good will of all people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Romans 5: 1-8

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 6: 3-11

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life… If we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him… The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8: 1-5

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For God has done what the law could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. And to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh. But those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

Romans 8: 22-25 *(transliteration)*

We know that the whole creation has been groaning.
The cosmos has been moaning, as if it were giving
Birth right up to this very day. We also groan
Inwardly… longing to know fully what
It means to be God's beloved child.
This is salvation, to know deeply,
And that for which we hope.
Though we've tasted it…
We still long for more.
So we hope, we wait.
With patience,
We wait.

Romans 8:28-29

We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him,
Those who have been called according to His purpose.
What, then, shall we say in response to this?
If God is for us, who can be against us?
He who did not spare his own Son, but gave Him up for us all –
How will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things.
Shall trouble or hardship or persecution separate us from the love of Christ?
No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Christ.
For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,
Neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,
Neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation,
Will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

I Corinthians 13:1-8, 13

If I speak in human and heavenly tongues but have not love,
I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.
If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love,
I am nothing.

If I give all I possess to the poor… but have not love,
I gain nothing.
Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.
It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered,
it keeps no record of wrongs.
Love does not delight in evil, but always rejoices in the truth.
It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.
Love never fails.
These three remain: faith, hope, and love.
But the greatest of these is love.

II Corinthians 4:7-10; 12
We have this treasure in jars of clay
to show this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.
We are hard pressed on every side,
but not crushed;
perplexed,
but not in despair;
persecuted,
but not abandoned;
struck down,
but not destroyed…
death may be at work in us,
but so is life.

II Corinthians 5:17-21
Those who are in Christ are new creations. The old things have passed away and everything is being made new. All this is from God, who reconciled us in Christ and called us to this ministry of reconciliation… Be reconciled to God today. Give thanks to God, who made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

Galatians 4:4-7
But when the time had fully come,
God sent his Son, born of a woman,
born under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.
Because you are sons and daughters,
God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts,
the Spirit who calls out, Abba… Father.
So you are no longer a slave,
but a son or daughter; and since you are a son or daughter,
God has made you also an heir.

Galatians 5

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery… Walk by the Spirit… The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Ephesians 1:3-10

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ:

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as heirs through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will – to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment – to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

Ephesians 1:16-23

I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe...

God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come.

And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Ephesians 2:1-10

As for all of us, we were dead in our sin… but because of God's great love and wealth of mercy, we are alive with Christ even though we were dead. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Christ in the heavenly realms,

in order that we might see the incomparable riches of this grace, expressed in kindness to us through Christ Jesus. For it is by grace we have been saved, through faith, it is the gift of God. We are all works of God's hands.

Ephesians 2:14-18

He himself is our peace, who has made the two one and had destroyed the barrier... He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For though him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

Philippians 2:5-11

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus,

who, being in very nature God,

Did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,

but made himself nothing,

Taking the very nature of a servant

being made in human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a man,

he humbled himself and became obedient to death

even death on a cross.

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,

that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God.

Colossians 1:15-20

He is the image of the invisible God,

the first born over all creation.

For by him all things were created:

things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible,

whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities;

all things were created by him and for him.

He is before all things,

and in him all things hold together.

And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the first born from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Philippians 3:12-14

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it.

But one thing I do: Forgetting what lies behind

and straining toward what is ahead,

I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Colossians 3:1-3

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on the things above, not on earthly things. For we have died, and our life is now hidden with Christ in God.

Hebrews 4: 14-16

Since we have a great high priest, Jesus Christ,

let us hold fast to our confession.

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses,

but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin.

Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness,

so that we may receive mercy

and find grace to help in the time of need.

Hebrews 10:19-25

Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain and since we have a great priest over the house of God,

Let us approach with a true heart

in full assurance of faith,

With our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience

and our bodies washed with pure water.

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess,

for he who has promised is faithful.

And let us consider how to spur one another to love and good deeds,

not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some,

but encouraging one another,

And all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Other Confessions of Faith

The Shema, Deuteronomy 6: 4-5

Hear, O Israel:
The Lord our God,
the Lord is one.
Love the Lord your God with all your heart
and with all your soul
and with all your strength.

A Confession from New Testament Passages

From the fullness of His grace we have all received one blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Having loved His own who were in the world,
He now showed them the full extent of his love.

God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich,
Yet for your sakes He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.

Because of His great love for us, God who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved.

The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth:

And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and was buried; He descended to the dead. On the third day He rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; Who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried, and on the third day He rose again according to the scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; And He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose Kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

And we believe in one catholic and apostolic church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins, and we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

A Contemporary Confession of Faith

We believe in an infinite God,
Who is powerful and mysterious,
Who is above all and through all and in all.
We believe in a risen Lord,
Who lived and loved and died and lived again,
Who gives us victory over death and life everlasting.
We believe in a life-giving Spirit,
Who blows like a fresh breeze through history,
Who kindles the flame of the Church,
Who renews each of us day by day.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end, amen and amen.

Songs of Affirmation

He is Lord

He is Lord, He is Lord! He is risen from the dead and He is Lord!
Ev'ry knee shall bow, ev'ry tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Be Thou My Vision

Be Thou my vision O Lord of my heart,
naught be all else to thee save that thou art.
Thou my best thought by day or by night.
Waking or sleeping Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my wisdom and Thou my true word.
I ever with Thee and Thou with me Lord.
Thou my great Father and I Thy true son.
Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one.

He Leadeth Me

He leadeth me! O blessed thought!
O words with heavenly comfort frought!
What – e're I do where – e're I be,
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me!

He leadeth me, He leadeth me.
By His own hand, he leadeth me;
His faithful follower I would be,
For by his hand he leadeth me.

Fairest Lord Jesus

Fairest Lord Jesus, ruler of all nature,
O thou of God and man the Son,
Thee will I cherish, thee will I honor,
Thou, my soul's glory, joy, and crown!

Beautiful Savior! Lord of all nations!
Son of God and Son of man!
Glory and honor, praise, adoration,
Now and forevermore be Thine!

Holy, Holy, Holy

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee.
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy, though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man, Thy glory may not see;
Only Thou art holy, there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in pow'r, in love and purity.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea;
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Come and Fill, by Taizé

Come and fill our hearts with your peace.
You alone, O Lord, are holy.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace,
Alleluia?

We Adore You, Jesus Christ, by Taizé

We adore you, Jesus Christ, and we bless your holy name;
Truly your cross and passion bring us life and healing,
Truly your cross and passion bring us life and healing.

By Your Cross, by Taizé

By your cross and all the wounds you suffered,
Grant us freedom in your love, grant us freedom in your love,
Grant us freedom in your love, in your love.
By your cross and all the wounds you suffered,
Grant us freedom in your love, grant us freedom in your love,
Grant us freedom in your love, in your love.
By your holy, life giving resurrection,
Grant us freedom in your love, grant us freedom in your love,
Grant us freedom in your love, in your love.

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Christ, to Thee with God the Father, and, O Holy Ghost, to Thee,
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving and unwearied praises be:
Honor, glory, and dominion, and eternal victory, evermore and evermore!

Hymns for the Time of Expressing Our Faith

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise; All Creatures of Our God and King; My Faith Has Found a Resting Place; He Leadeth Me; Like a River Glorious; Break Thou the Bread of Life; Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus; Of the Father's Love Begotten; O Sacred Head, Now Wounded; Alleluia! Sing to Jesus; Christ the Lord is Risen Today; Crown Him with Many Crowns; In Christ There Is No East or West; The Church's One Foundation; How Firm a Foundation; Be Thou My Vision; Holy, Holy, Holy; Lead On, O King Eternal; Jesus! What a Friend for Sinners; Jesus Shall Reign; Rejoice! The Lord is King; Come, Thou Almighty King; God, Our Father, We Adore Thee

Blessing and Departing

Blessings From Scripture

Numbers 6:24-26

And now may the Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord cause his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance and give you peace.

Psalm 16

Keep me safe, O God, for in you I take refuge. You are my Lord; apart from you I have no good thing. You have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure. You will not abandon me to the grave... you have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.

Psalm 123

I lift up my eyes to you,
whose throne is in heaven.
As the eyes of servants
look to the hand of their master,
So our eyes look to the Lord our God,
till he shows us his mercy.
Have mercy on us, O Lord,
have mercy on us.

Luke 3: 29-32

Lord, now you let your servant go in peace;
Your word has been fulfilled.
My eyes have seen the salvation
You have prepared in the sight of every people,
A light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people, Israel.

Romans 16:25-27

Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him – to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Ephesians 3: 17-19

I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:20-21

Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen.

Philippians 3:12-14

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But onething I do: Forgetting what lies behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 13 *(transliteration)*

Now may the God of peace make you whole. The One who has brought our Lord Jesus back from the dead. The one who works among you all that is pleasing. To Him be the glory forever and ever.
Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Amen.

I Peter 2:9

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty
acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Jude 24-25

To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

Revelation 5:11-14

To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, forever and ever! Amen.

Words of Benediction from the Tradition

Augustinian Benediction

Created anew in Him and made perfect in a more plentiful grace, we shall see in that eternal rest that it is he who is God, he with whom we shall be filled... That day will be our eternal Sunday... There we shall be in peace and we shall see. We shall see and we shall love. We shall love and we shall worship.

Ignatian Benediction

Fill us, we pray thee, with thy light and life,
that we may show forth thy wondrous glory.
Grant that thy love may so fill our lives that we may count
nothing too small to do for thee,
nothing too much to give and nothing too hard to bear.

Benediction of St. Ioannickios

To God the Creator, God the Son,
And Holy Spirit, three in one,
Unceasing practice and glory be,
Now and through all eternity.

O Father, my hope:
O Son, my refuge:
O Holy Spirit, my protection:
Holy Trinity, glory to Thee.

Commission of St. John of Kronstadt

The Lord has become everything for you,
And you must become everything for the Lord.

Celtic Benediction

Christ be within to keep us,
Beside to guard us,
Before to lead us,
Behind to protect us,
Beneath to lead us,
Above to bless us.

God be in my head, and in my understanding.
God be in my eyes, and in my looking.
God be in my mouth, and in my speaking.
God be in my heart, and in my thinking.
God be at my end, and in my departing.

St. Patrick's Breastplate

God's strength to comfort me, God's might to uphold me,
God's wisdom to guide me, God's eye to look before me,
God's ear to hear me, God's word to speak for me,
God's hand to lead me, God's way to lie before me,
God's shield to protect me, God's angels to save me.

St. Patrick's Blessing

May the strength of God pilot us,
May the power of God preserve us,
May the wisdom of God instruct us,
May the hand of God protect us,
May the way of God direct us,
May the shield of God defend us,
May the host of God guard us.

Contemporary Celtic Blessing, Iona Community

God bless to you today, the earth beneath your feet, the path on which you tread, the work of hand and mind, the things which you desire. And when the day is over, God bless to you your rest.

Traditional Benediction

Father in heaven, the hand of your loving kindness powerfully, yet gently, guides all the moments of our days.

Go before us in this pilgrimage of life to prevent our falling. Send your Spirit to unite us to your heart, that we may rejoice in Your abiding presence. All this we ask through Christ our Lord.

Contemplative Benediction

Lord, let me pass gently from this place, which is for me a rest in your eternal stillness. And as night descends, may my spirit move down into the deep, deep peace of union with you. May star and moon and their steady soft illumination express the constellations within me, reflective of a grace that is not mine but yours. Wipe clean the mirror of my heart and let me see this day as it has been... and myself as I am... held in your embrace. Amen.

- Lynn Bauman (adapted by Burt Burleson)

Anglican Benediction

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angles charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake. Amen. *(Book of Common Prayer)*

Contemporary Benediction

I put my trust in You today. Lead me to Your arms.
Wash me in your light. Fill me with Your quietness.
Show me the irrelevancy of shadows –
of discontents and desires-
of resentments and idle thoughts-
of everything I think I made of myself apart from You.
Hold me and talk to me
until I see myself as You have seen me always,
until I know myself as You have known me forever,
until I find myself where I have never left,
bathed in Your joy, secure in Your love,
at home, at rest, at one with You.

- Hugh Prather

The Serenity Prayer

God, give us grace to accept with serenity the things that cannot be changed, courage to change the things that should be changed, and the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other.

- Reinhold Niebuhr

A Blessing for a Day at College

Go forth in the peace of Christ...
Into classrooms and cubicles,
Into libraries and laboratories,
Into hard work and into good play,
Into ancient wisdom and into new ideas,
Into safe places and into risky ones,
Into receiving and into surrender,
Into assurance and into mystery.
And when the day is done, may you rest well,
grateful that this was the day the Lord made
and that you got to be a part of it.

Songs of Blessing and Benediction

The Lord Whom We Love

The Lord whom we love, whom we worship and adore,
We will serve throughout this coming week.
He it is who binds us together,
And He it is who sends us apart,
To be God's people, be God's people. Amen. *(Kurt Kaiser)*

Go in Peace

Go in peace, live in grace, trust in the arms that will hold you.
Go in peace, live in grace, trust God's love.
Love, O may this love, be in our hearts forever.
Go in peace, live in grace, trust in the arms that will hold you.
Go in peace, live in grace, trust God's love. *(Brasher-Cunningham, Crockett)*

Give Peace, by Taizé

Give peace to every heart. Give peace to every heart.
Give peace, Lord. Give peace, Lord.

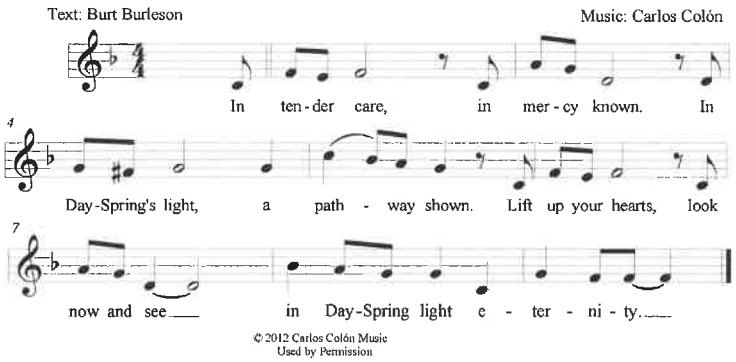
Live in Charity, by Taizé

Live in charity and steadfast love,
Live in charity and God will dwell with you.

Remain

Remain in the company of God this day.
Remain in the company of God.
Remain in the company of God this day.
Remain, remain, remain. *(Bauman)*

In DaySpring's Light


Text: Burt Burleson
Music: Carlos Colón
In ten - der care, in mer - cy known. In
4
Day-Spring's light, a path - way shown. Lift up your hearts, look
7
now and see in Day-Spring light e - ter - ni - ty.

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Guidance for Leaders

Guidance for Leaders

1. **Take Time to Prepare** – While this book is designed, and was in some sense created, so that anyone can pick it up and lead prayers without even having thought through a service, that is not what we encourage. God honors our preparation and taking time to prayerfully prepare, will help to make the time of prayer meaningful. We encourage each leader to try and "feel the flow" of a service, thinking about the experience of those praying, about how each element fits into the liturgy, and the timeliness of that particular prayer. As plans are made for a service, then we're better able to entrust the service into God's care and to be present ourselves as worshippers. Our preparation leads to true presence and our presence will prompt others to be present, which is vital to our common experience.

2. **Balance Expressions** – Each movement or element in a service can be experienced in many ways and we encourage leaders to vary these expressions as services are planned, knowing that each form of prayer involves us in important and different ways. Prayers can be prayed extemporaneously or written and read during the service. Litanies and responsive and unison readings are each unique ways of experiencing prayer. Songs, scripture readings, and silence each engage a different part of who we are. Try to balance the ways of praying so that some things are heard, some things are said, some things are sung, some things are read, some things are recited, and some things are repeated. All these ways of praying are important.

3. **Use a Variety of Voices and Leaders** – Free Church worship has always valued the voice of the laity. It's one way in which "the priesthood of all believers" has been affirmed and conveyed. In addition to manifesting this theological conviction, we also know that God speaks in unique ways through different people with their different voices. Some will be bold, some timid. Some will sound like a flute, others like a cello. These different sounds convey different things. Using various folks in leadership also is an opportunity to teach, in more depth, about worship as we prepare them for their role.

4. **Offer Some Explanation and Education** – In most settings in this post-denominational, ecumenical culture, when we gather to pray we're likely to be in the room with folks who come from various traditions and who have very different experiences in prayer. While it's important not to use too many words as a leader, from time to time, it will help those praying to understand why a particular way of praying is important. For example, a leader might:

- Point out the exhaustive nature of the Psalms and that the Psalter is our basic prayer book.
- Site the context of a particular ancient prayer and the saint who wrote it.

- Explain how litanies or chants focus our attention.
- Suggest ways of dealing with a wandering mind during silence.
- Theologize briefly about the nature of intercession.
- Offer a word about why repetition from week to week is important.

Words of explanation should be brief and not necessarily a regular component. Worshippers learn to worship best by worshipping and then, later, they come to understand the experience they are having but given a diverse university context, some education will help, especially in the beginning.

5. Value Continuity and Discontinuity, Ritual and Spontaneity – The importance of good ritual has been affirmed in every age, culture, and religion. What we repeat forms us deeply. However, we also know to value the Spirit that moves where it will, like the wind. In a Free Church context, we can express and enjoy both. Continuity transitions us quickly into the sacred. Discontinuity and spontaneity awaken us to God's presence speaking a fresh word. This balance is especially important when working with young adults.

6. Remember that Space, and How We Us It, Matters – Leaders should ask, "what's in the room?" What are folks going to see when they walk into the space? Will there be a symbol, some color, a piece of artwork, something alive, something new that nudges those gathering towards the experience of prayer. What will they see as they pray? This may mean cleaning the room. It may mean positioning the lectern or removing it altogether. It could mean rearranging chairs so that they see one another or perhaps see the world through a window. What if a cross is brought into the room during an opening prayer? What if a large Bible is read from the middle of the room? We pray with all of who we are. Our space matters and will influence the service in quietly profound ways.

7. Be Mindful of All that is "In the Room" – The world is gathered in every congregation. Most every challenge, most every sin, most every wound, most every anxiety, most every dream, most every disappointment... most everything is in the room and worship leaders should be mindful of this as they plan and lead. Leaders need to be sensitive to individuals as they prepare and allow life's realities to awaken them to the significance of common prayer in the midst of those realities.

8. Allow the World to Impact the Liturgy – As the doors are opened for a prayer service, life from outside flows in along with those coming to pray. On a college campus, this means the beginning of school, homecoming, finals, and other events or crises are on the hearts and minds of those praying. Realities in the broader culture are also present; an election, a war, holidays like Thanksgiving or Martin Luther King, Jr. day. Certainly, the Church's Calendar will be present (see the following orientation). These contextual realities should always be considered and allowed to influence the service in appropriate ways.

The Christian Calendar

The Christian Calendar
A Brief Orientation

The Church Calendar Year is the term used to describe how the Church shapes its worship practice according to the Life of Christ. It's a sacred way of keeping time, which Liturgical traditions have observed for centuries and, which many non-liturgical traditions have discovered and come to appreciate in recent decades. The seasons of the Church year correspond to the life of Christ and each season is marked by different moods, colors, songs, scriptures, and services.

Those who lead daily prayer services are encourage to be mindful of these seasons and the rich opportunity they hold for spiritual experience and formation. The idea is that our journeys, over time, come to be conformed to the journeys that Christ and his Church make. This is, in many ways, subtle spiritual work that Christians only come to appreciate after moving through the motions of the Church Calendar for years. Daily prayer services are an opportunity to initiate this spiritual work.

Church Calendar resources are plentiful and will include prayers, liturgies, music, and suggestions for appointing places of prayer. This brief orientation will help those planning daily services to consider appropriate themes for prayer in each season.

Advent

This season, in which we prepare for the coming of Christ, (Advent means "coming") begins in quiet reflection and longing four Sundays before December 25th and ends on Christmas Day in joyful celebration. Traditional colors are purple or royal blue but many churches also use the cultural red. Greenery, candles, bows, lights, trees, and incarnational symbols are also use in worship spaces.

Scriptures to augment prayer are taken traditionally from the prophets. Texts such as **Isaiah 7: 14; 11: 1-2 40: 1-2; 61: 1-2; Haggai 2: 6-7; Zechariah 2: 10-11; and Malachi 3:1** are used early in Advent. As Christmas nears passages from the gospels like **Matthew 1:23; Mark 1: 2-3; and Luke 1: 47-55; and 1: 78-79** are used.

Prayers that encourage us to wait, to examine, to watch, and prepare for the coming of the light are all important. This ancient prayer from Clement of Alexandria is a good model. ***"Let us receive the light and we will receive God. Let us receive the light and become disciples of the Lord. Sing, O Word; reveal the Creator to us. Your words will save us and your songs will teach us. We are the people of God's love. Let us sing, and never cease, to the God of peace above. Amen."***

Christmas

While our culture has a very different rhythm, the Christmas celebration actually doesn't begin until December 25th and goes for 12 days to Epiphany. The

color is white, the mood is joyful. Scriptures telling the story of Jesus' birth and the early years of his life are, of course, read in addition to John's prologue and Pauline texts, which speak of the nature of Christ such as Colossians 1.

This traditional prayer from the Book of Common Prayer embodies both the mood and confession of the season. ***"You have wonderfully created us, O God, and yet more wonderfully restored the dignity of human nature. Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ. Amen."***

Epiphany

The traditional day to observe Epiphany, which celebrates the gospel coming to the nations through the magi story, is January 6th. However, most congregations will also emphasize Epiphany on the Sunday following January 6th. Colors are white and gold.

Isaiah 60: 1-3 is the text most often associated with the season along with Matthew's telling of the magi. This 4th century prayer from Ambrose also fittingly expresses the profundity of this season. ***"O Splendor of God's glory bright, from light eternal bringing light, O light of life, the living Spring, true Day, all days illumining. Dawn's glory gilds the earth and skies; let Him, our perfect Morn, arise, the Word in God Almighty one, Creator imaged in the Son. Amen."***

Lent

Lent is a forty-day period of repentance and discipline. It is also a season where Christians make a journey with Jesus to the cross. Lent is a time to prepare to enter and understand more fully the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The color is purple and scriptures such **Psalm 51; Isaiah 30: 15; 58: 8-9; Joel 2:13; and Matthew 16: 24** are read during the season.

Prayers are typically focused on repentance and the need for grace and courage to follow Christ. This prayer from St. Augustine is reflective of the confession called forth in Lent. ***"Our hearts are sinful; cleanse them with your precious blood. Our hearts are weak; strengthen them with your joyous Spirit. Our hearts are empty; fill them with your divine presence. Lord Jesus, our hearts are yours; possess them always and only for yourself."***

Holy Week

Holy week begins on Palm Sunday, which commemorates Jesus Triumphant entry and leads us through the intense days in Jerusalem; Maundy Thursday, Good Friday; and Easter. The colors change from purple to red to black to white on those days respectively. Each day's mood and contribution to our grand narrative is unique but all days of the week acknowledge the reality of God's suffering and death in Christ. Even Easter remembers this in the midst of immense joy.

These scriptures are among many typically used in the various observances and services of Holy Week.

Palm Sunday – **Psalm 24: 9-10; Matthew 21: 42; 21:9; Luke 9:51**
Maundy Thursday – **Psalm 116; Matthew 20: 26-28; 26: 26-28; John 13: 4-10**
Good Friday – **Isaiah 53: 3, 5; Lamentations 1: 12; Matthew 16: 24-25; Philippians 2: 7-8**
Easter – **John 20: 19-20; Colossians 3:1; I Peter 1:3**

Ascension

This culminating event is commemorated 40 days after Easter and with scriptures such as: **Psalm 47: 5-8; Mark 16: 19-20; Luke 24: 51-53.**

Pentecost

The birthday of the Church and the outpouring of the Spirit is celebrated 50 days after Easter. The color for the day is, of course, bright red and the mood of the day is both mysterious and joyful. Scriptures used include: **Joel 2: 28; John 20: -21-23; Revelation 22: 17.**

This adapted Orthodox prayer captures the spirit of the day. ***Glory to you, O God, glory to you! Heavenly Ruler, Comforter, Spirit of truth, come and dwell within us. You who are everywhere and who fills all things, treasury of all good and giver of life, come, Holy Spirit, and dwell among us. Cleanse us from all sin and through your goodness, redeem our souls. Come, Holy Spirit, and dwell among us."***

The Season After Pentecost... Kingdomtide

This season begins on Trinity Sunday, the Sunday following Pentecost. The color is changed now to green. It is the longest season in the calendar year and its length is suggestive of the long journey we make as Christians towards holiness. It is also referred to as Ordinary Time, in contrast to the very dramatic days that mark the other half of the calendar when the incarnation is remembered, retold, and relived. Ordinary time ends on Christ the King Sunday, the week before Advent begins again.

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